

**The Usage of Personal Data as Content in Integrated Marketing Communications, an  
Exploratory Case Study**

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## **Abstract**

Personal user data has proven extremely valuable for firms in the digital age. The wealth of data available to firms has provided unprecedented access into the world of the consumer. Companies hoping to capitalize on their user's data have turned to several interesting outlets. This research addresses the repurposing of user data as content in marketing. By analyzing four cases of data presented as marketing communications across two companies, this research provides new insights into the public release of private user data for marketing purposes. Four cases of personal data used in marketing communications were chosen specifically for their time proximity, characteristics of the sending firms, and their disparate outcomes. These instances of marketing communications, two by Spotify and two by Netflix, were released during November and December of 2017 and each resulted in a diverse range of public opinion. An analysis of these cases was conducted using the comprehensive framework of integrated marketing communications (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017). There is a significant difference in the perceptual outcomes of integrated marketing communication campaigns which display user data as content. This analysis provides insights into the characteristics of marketing communications and how their outcomes fit into broader marketing strategies. These case studies provide opportunities for marketers to improve their campaigns in line with their desired audience outcome. Patterns of scope, strategy, mode, and outcome do not suggest success or failure in the context of marketing communications, but rather a set of insights marketers should keep in mind when pursuing communication strategies which harness personal user data.

## Introduction

Digital native firms are companies whose primary product or service exists principally or entirely online; streaming services are a facet of consumer facing digital native firms that are prolific in the use of personal data as content in marketing communications. These companies often invest heavily in marketing and consumer experiences that expand a consumer's experience of the brand beyond initial digital touchpoints. While the implications for this practice span digital and non-digital firms, the rate at which personal data has the capacity to be used to create content is higher for digital firms (Christl, Kopp, & Riechert, 2017). To expand brand value in the face of increased competition, digital native firms want to build branded experiences outside of their platform. External branded experiences can include word of mouth, publicity, and influencer partnerships. These techniques can generally be difficult for brands to control, but can have a positive impact on both brand awareness and meaning for the end consumer (Berry, 2000). Through external branded experiences companies aim to create deeper personal and social brand associations with their audience (Castronovo & Huang, 2012). It has been well established that user data is the primary resource for services' creation of internal branded experiences (Cremonesi, et. Al., 2011). Internal branded experiences are the sum of "brand-related stimuli" which constitute most of a consumer's response to a brand (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009). Digital native brands are uniquely positioned to build highly personalized platforms to each individual consumer through the application of a vast network of personal data collected by the company. As a result of their success building internal experiences, many services have begun transforming user data into advertisements from their platform. This can be a very sensitive topic for consumers who have become increasingly wary of services' and other third-party's misuse of personal data which can include improperly selling,

sharing, or losing data to hackers (dos Santos Brito, et. Al., 2013). When firms violate data privacy they violate consumer trust, which can in turn damage market share; publicly traded companies who experience a data breach see their shares fall on average 7.27% in the first two weeks following a data breach (Bischoff, 2019). Firms striving to successfully build positive brand associations through use of personal data externally must understand how users perceive their application of their data and be sensitive to perceptions of misuse of their user data.

This paper explores how two digital streaming services have had public successes and failures with their use of personal user data in advertising. Successfully using data is important due to the increased competition in the streaming space that threatens the market position of streaming service giants, motivating them to take on the risk of utilizing personal data in their marketing communications (Littleton, 2018) The process of integrating personal data as the content in marketing communications involves many steps be taken long before the consumer's interaction with the organization's messaging. Marketing efforts using personal data as the content of the marketing message generally share several similarities with marketing campaigns that are not based on data. A comprehensive analysis of the creation and outcome of integrated marketing communications (IMC) campaigns can provide a holistic understanding of how the inclusion of user data as content influences marketing campaigns. With a better understanding of corporate and consumer perceptions of the use of personal data in advertising, cases studies of four major digital services disparate experiences using personal data as promotional content will be analyzed through the IMC framework. This research focuses on the public reaction to Spotify's '2018 Goals' and '2017 Wrapped', and Netflix's 'Christmas Prince' tweet and 'Year in Bingeing'. These were selected because they reflect a wide range of public acceptance from overwhelmingly positive to very negative. Analysis of the messaging, placement, and context of

these promotions will contribute to a better understanding of their disparate receptions from the public. Contextualizing the desire for companies to utilize personal data in creating advertising, and the public perception of data application, will allow for more positive brand associations moving forward.

This research will serve as an exploration into the emerging use of personal data as content in marketing communications. This research was conducted through a comprehensive review of these campaign's characteristics and outcomes utilizing an IMC framework. This will allow for an understanding of the elements that lead to successful marketing communications, and how firms hoping to create added value with personal data in marketing can accomplish their goals without alienating their consumers.

## **Background**

The magnitude of consumer data collection by firms has grown significantly in recent years, and the marketing capabilities provided by this increase are wide reaching (DOMO, 2017). An examination of firms' usage of personal data as content in marketing communications supports a better understanding of how user data can add value to consumers' experiences with a brand. As brands can more effectively target consumers, down to the individual level, there are several considerations that firms must acknowledge regarding the tactical and psychological impact of their communication strategies. The effectiveness of advertising can be improved through the use of personal data as a tool for targeting specific customers. A great deal of research has been done to examine the use of data in advertising targeting, and consumer sentiment regarding personal data (Wagner, 2018; dos Santos Brito, et al., 2013). Additionally, the use of personal data in user experiences has received a great deal of focus; however, there has not been a great deal of research into the characteristics of communications which apply user data into public marketing materials (Cremonesi, et al., 2011). Consumer's perception of applications of user data in advertising and the techniques which can be used to add value through the application of consumer data in marketing content should weigh heavily into firms' choice to capitalize on this opportunity.

Firms can find value in their ability to utilize data in a manner that influences how consumers interact with the brand, and it's advertising (Malgieri & Custers, 2018). Due to the sensitive nature of personal data, it is essential to understand how a firm might leverage their data analysis skills to ensure positive consumer perception of the message and therefore of the brand. The ability to transform personal data into effective marketing communications provides firms the ability to make a deeper personal connection with consumers. Additionally, this

process allows for synchronicity between a consumer's direct product experience and the brand communications they receive. Personal data touches a uniquely deep nerve for the modern consumer and the use, or misuse, of this data can quickly change perceptions of a brand. Privacy concerns, whether associated with lack of education, inherent distrust, or another degree of concern, plague direct marketers and are likely to persist (Nowak & Phelps, 1992), and must be taken into consideration when a firm chooses to use a consumer's personal data.

Many of the applications of personal data in marketing communications to date have come from digitally native firms. This technique is particularly popular with digital platforms in which the user experience with the brand is tied almost exclusively to their use of the digital platform. Examples of these types of firms are Uber, Google Maps, and Xbox. Brands that exist primarily online have increased motivation to utilize their data collection capabilities in marketing communications, as it facilitates the creation and strengthening of brand communities (Wirtz et al., 2013). Brand communities are the groups of the most enthusiastic followers of a brand, organized around the brand's philosophy and culture. Each of these brands, and many others, have repurposed consumer data into marketing vehicles with the most common being year end user reports. These reports represent significant insights from user data collected across the year on a firm wide or individual level. Generally, firm wide reports are shared publicly, while individual reports are sent to each user with the option to share publicly.

Current events and revelations regarding the use of personal data often influence public opinion regarding the use of this data. The rapid dissemination of news stories, laws enacted, and discussion regarding data control is sure to influence how consumers perceive their data being used in marketing. Marketing communications using personal data launched in 2017 also had to contend with 1.9 Billion data records leaked in the first six months, and days following news that



an Uber breach exposed the data of 57 million customers and drivers (Summerfield, 2018; Wong, 2017). News of breaches, and the developing status of data regulations, including the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), contributed to a general sense of unease regarding data use in late 2017, with one study finding 69% of consumers concerned with the care firms take to protect their personal data (Tannam, 2017). In such a tense time regarding user data, firms were still willing to take the risk of rejection by placing personal data in advertising due to the perceived value of user data driven marketing communications. This context allows us to understand the concerns of firms and consumers while conducting an analysis of the outcomes of these cases.

Firms strive to create an ongoing and diverse conversation regarding their brand to strengthen the brands value in the mind of the consumer, and personal data allows for the quick identification of users with similar habits (Lee & Price, 2016). The streaming industry is well positioned to repurpose the vast collection of data it generates into marketing content. Streaming service businesses are built upon internal branded content created from user data. Many streaming services are among the firms most well known for their algorithmic techniques which provide highly curated, but platform bound, user experiences (Aguilar & Waldfogel 2018). Netflix creates highly specific user profiles in which the thumbnails, trailers, and ordering of shows all within a platform that has the same template for each user. The algorithm provides a unique browsing experience for each user, even though the total content Netflix's platform holds is the same for each subscriber. A user who spends more time watching comedies will be shown a lighthearted thumbnail for a movie where a user who spends more time viewing dramas would likely be shown a more emotional image for the same movie (Barton, 2018). Users can share a

common understanding of the Netflix experience, even though the shows may be presented to them individually in vastly different formats.

Spotify and Netflix are two streaming service companies who have attempted to utilize personal data in marketing communications, with different executions and to various degrees of success. This research will examine how each firm structured their utilization of personal data as a means of creating an IMC, and what the resulting reaction from the public to these campaigns were. The four cases will be discussed within the context of an IMC framework in order to determine how they compare to each other and what insights can be gained from each case for a broader application of personal data as content in marketing communications (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

## **Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) Framework**

The integrated marketing communications framework developed by Tafesse and Kitchen (2017) is a comprehensive synthesis of the present work surrounding IMC. It presents three divergent theories of IMC structure and reexamines them as a single integrative framework. The development of well-defined scales of IMC effectiveness is one of the largest challenges for researchers on the topic. The current empirical evidence of IMC's effectiveness is primarily limited to individual practitioner's scales. These limit the ability to apply concepts on a broader organizational level. Their review allows for the cases to be examined using both practical measurements and theoretical constructs of the planning and implementation of IMC. The review's managerial and academic focus makes it appropriate for this analysis.

In following the structure of Tafesse and Kitchen's (2017) IMC framework the structure of a case analysis will first serve to break down the organizational support processes for each firm, the messaging components, and the outcomes of each case as seen in Figure 1. Feedback relationships between the dimensions of the framework will be discussed within their respective cases. Each chosen case's time and content proximity within the context of its firm suggests a high level of applicability to utilization of IMC frameworks for analysis. Consistent themes, and unique messaging specifics allow us to understand how individual messaging characteristics influence communication and organizational outcomes (Đokić, 2018). IMC efforts utilize cohesive strategic planning in order to enhance brand image. While a higher-level planning effort is often used to influence the function of IMC as a marketing tool, the group or individual level decisions at an implementation level have a high level of influence on the function of these messages. As such, we will be able to understand how organizational processes influence messaging components which influence the outcome of IMC.

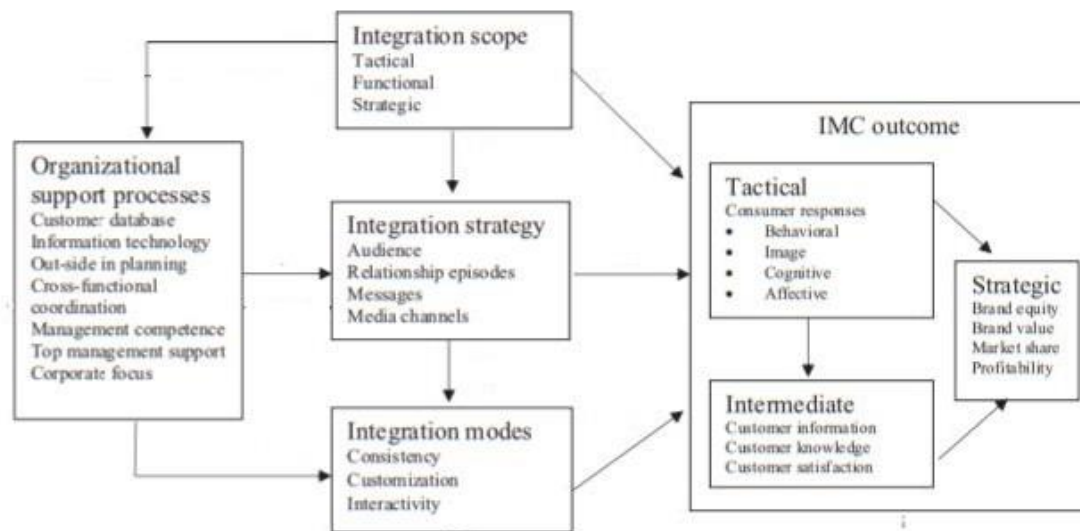


Figure 1: The Integrated Marketing Communication Framework Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017

### Organizational Support Processes

Organizational support processes are the tools mobilized by companies in the planning and implementation of marketing communications. Firms with a culture of cross functional cooperation and efficient operations can more effectively implement a marketing strategy. Technology that supports the marketing process include the databases and systems that allow marketers to obtain and analyze consumer data. A clear focus developed and instituted by companywide management contribute to effective IMC efforts as they influence the decision-making process at each subsequent level (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

### Integration Scope

Integration scope is defined as the scale of planning of IMC campaigns within organizations. This can range from an individual marketer running a one-off communications campaign, or an organization wide push of information to increase brand awareness. Scope

heavily determines the resources and capabilities which are applied to the creation of marketing campaigns. IMC programs of varying scope have different outcomes when it comes to longevity and scale. Tactical programs are executed in the short term, and their outcomes are more likely to be limited to behavioral responses. Functional programs exist over a longer time horizon utilizing multiple marketing actions which establish intermediate consumer outcomes. Strategic programs achieve strategic outcomes through the activation of cross functional processes, and creation of marketing efforts that span the organization (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

### **Integration Strategy**

The Integration Strategy of IMC campaigns refers primarily to the decisions made in the relationship building stages within IMC planning. Audience and messaging strategies are decided in this stage of the process. Marketers determine who their audience is, how they want to build this relationship, what the messaging is comprised of, and where the messaging can be found. The choice of audience, channel, and message are interlocking processes which serve to most appropriately achieve the goals of the marketing communications. A firm's integration strategy is the output of the analytical framework that provides direction for the materialization of IMC. The quality of decision making towards the integration strategy enhances marketing outcomes (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

### **Integration Mode**

When marketers have determined the organizational planning processes and approach for IMC campaigns, they must begin the execution process. Integration mode of IMC campaigns refers to the tactics used to match messaging with the desired audience. This process involves marketers' decisions regarding message consistency, customization, and interactivity. The

implications of integration mode affect the efficiency of communications, and how the chosen audience and message interact (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

### **IMC Outcomes**

The outcomes of individual IMC campaigns are often interrelated and are magnified by the progression of additional marketing efforts. Tafesse and Kitchen (2017) propose that the outcomes of IMC can be broken down to any combination of Tactical, Intermediate, and Strategic factors. The determination of which aspects of IMC outcome are relevant to each campaign are due in large part to the contributing factors of Organizational Support, Scope, Strategy, and Mode. At the moment of the consumer exposure, IMC campaigns generate tactical responses in their viewers. Tactical responses are the consumers' one-time reaction to campaign exposure. Instances of tactical response potentially generate information, knowledge, and satisfaction; this is the intermediate outcome. There is also the potential for strategic outcomes in which IMC campaigns contribute to overall brand value, market share, and profitability. An understanding of IMC outcomes allows us to understand the overall value of marketing efforts.

An effective synthesis of the tactical responses to these campaigns can be found in the secondary content they generate online. The creation of news articles, blogs, and social media content in response to IMC campaigns indicates some level of consumer response, an aggregation of these responses will allow us to understand the prevailing tactical impact IMC campaigns have on consumers (Godbole, Srinivasaiah, & Skiena, 2007). The levels of IMC outcome are interrelated such that one-time tactical responses are analyzed over time and grow to influence customer knowledge of a brand, intermediate outcome. Intermediate outcomes build brand value and profitability as marketers service consumer needs over time; these strategic

outcomes create organization wide impact through effective implementation of IMC (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

## **Research Methodology**

As a qualitative research pursuit, this thesis follows an exploratory case study of four distinct instances in which personal data has been utilized in marketing communications (Zainal, 2007). The cases in question are Spotify's '2018 Goals' and '2017 Wrapped' and Netflix's 'A Christmas Prince Tweet' and 'The Year in Bingeing.' Said instances of personal data as content in marketing were released on 11/27/2017, 12/5/2017, 12/10/2017, and 12/11/2017 respectively. These were chosen as they were all released within a relatively short period of time and garnered distinctly different responses. The chosen cases encompass Netflix and Spotify's utilization of personal data in advertising during the specified time period, this will allow for an analysis of data in marketing within a similar context. Holding this analysis to such a tight window will control for external factors that might influence public perception of data use, as 2017 was a notable year in terms stories of data use and misuse in the news.

The data collection process is comprised of an observation and analysis of the inputs and outcomes following the IMC framework to break down each campaign into its fundamental components. This framework compiles decades of marketing theory into a model which accounts for the organizational processes, components, and outcomes of integrated marketing communications. A structured framework for the comparison of each case will allow for an understanding of how individual components contribute to the overall story of each message. The organizational processes of IMC for each firm will remain constant; however, the components and outcomes for each case will be evaluated separately.

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding within the IMC of the outcomes these campaigns garnered, a sentiment analysis was conducted of the responses to each case. ParallelDots' free excel text sentiment Application Programming Interface (API) program was used to determine public response sentiment, emotion, and key takeaways (Appel, Chiclana, & Carter, 2015). In order to obtain both an objective and subjective base of text to analyze, data was selected from articles and blogs written in response to each case (Kvale, 1992). The data set includes any embedded social content within the articles, including tweets, and Facebook content. The sampling of resources will fit a convenience approach, analyzing the content which is most easily available to the consumer during the incident. This represents the responses and data a consumer would have most likely seen and have been able to most readily access when looking for content surrounding the release of each campaign. For pragmatic reasons, namely the limited number of available resources for this case, and the overlap in some resources when two or more cases were occurring simultaneously, the data collected will be limited. A 2014 study by Ando, Cousins, & Young concluded that 12 is a sufficient sample size for thematic analysis where higher-level concepts are concerned. Here, 30 results have been chosen for analysis in order to ensure a high level of thematic clarity. In analyzing the outcome of these cases, the first 30 Google search results from the date of each incident and up to seven days afterward using the titles above as keywords, for sentiment, emotion, and keyword analysis are used. This is accomplished utilizing a time bound Google news search from the release date, until 30 direct results have been collected. The Google search terms used will be 'Spotify's 2018 Goals,' 'Spotify 2017 Wrapped,' 'Netflix's A Christmas Prince Tweet,' and 'Netflix's 2017 Year in Bingeing.' This will allow an understanding of how the IMC framework inputs which distinguish each case affect IMC outcomes. Articles reflecting the most immediate responses to each case



have been sourced and run through a text sentiment API. The titles were also analyzed by the API. This was done to understand if outlets are creating more polarizing titles than the overall article for each case (Chakraborty, et. al., 2016).

## Analysis

A Chi square analysis of the composition of responses across each case was conducted in order to understand if the cases demonstrate a statistical difference in emotional response. A significant difference in emotional response across the cases would provide a basis for the assertion that there is a difference in tactical IMC outcomes across the cases (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017). A Chi square test of homogeneity was run to examine the relationship between emotional response of both article titles and article content. The relationship between article *content* and emotional sentiment is  $X^2(6, N 120) = 20.511, p = .002$  (Table 1). The relationship between article *title* and emotional sentiment is  $X^2(6, N 120) = 23.378, p = .001$  (Table 2). This shows that there is a statistically significant difference in sentiment across the titles of each case, as well as the content. There is a difference in responses to each instance regarding the use of data as content in advertising which is sought to be understood through an analysis of each cases formation and outcome.

Table 1

*Content Sentiment Analysis Chi-Square Tests*  
**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.511 <sup>a</sup>	6	.002**
Likelihood Ratio	21.464	6	.002**
N of Valid Cases	120		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.00.

\*Note \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Table 2: *Title Sentiment Analysis Chi-Square Tests*  
**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.378 <sup>a</sup>	6	.001
Likelihood Ratio	23.677	6	.001
N of Valid Cases	120		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.25.

\*Note \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

## Spotify Case Studies

### *Organizational Support Processes*

Spotify is an online audio streaming service which primarily features music and podcasts. Data is at the center of Spotify's operations, and greatly influences their operations. The size of Spotify's customer database has been slowly revealed through data regulations. GDPR data requests have allowed for some of the clearest glimpses into Spotify's data collection processes. Every user interaction with Spotify, from screen size to headphone brand, is tracked by the platform (Steipete, 2018). The expanse of Spotify's customer databases is navigated by cross disciplinary teams of user researchers and data scientists (Belt & Gliks, 2018). This data allows for a substantial profile of individual users, which is utilized to improve the customer experience.

Spotify's top management are often heralded as some of the highest achievers in their industry. There is a wealth of both knowledge and experience at the helm of Spotify that guide its operations. Seth Farbman, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) at the time of each of these marketing campaigns, has an abundance of experience marketing global brands. In 2018 *Business Insider* named him the most innovative CMO in the world, highlighting the '2018 Goals' campaign as one of his many successes at the company (Dua, 2018). Spotify uses approximately 14% of revenue to cover marketing cost, roughly \$700 million of their \$5 billion in revenue in 2017. Spotify achieves marketing efficiency through word of mouth growth, and the company has decreased investment in paid marketing, with the majority of paid marketing efforts going towards the introductory "freemium go-to-market strategy" (Goodwater Thesis, 2019).

## **Spotify: '2018 Goals'**

### ***Integration Scope***

Spotify's in-house marketing and creative teams were wholly responsible for the delivery of the "2018 Goals" campaign. The scope of the planning of the '2018 Goals' campaign follows with what would be considered a functional scope in the IMC framework. Marketing analysts work in a cross functional role within the organization, allowing the team to harness insights from Spotify's data teams. The campaign was ordered from the highest levels of the company, but it was planned and implemented functionally and locally. Despite having ultimate control over the campaign, CMO Seth Farbman acknowledged that he didn't "know how many individual executions there are" (Nudd, 2017b). This is a function of the high level of freedom given to employees managing specific markets. Each marketing, analyst, and creative employees' contribution to the program suggest an "outside in" strategy, basing all marketing activities on consumer trends (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

### ***Integration Strategy***

The out of home (OOH) nature of the 2018 Goals campaign provides exposure to the general public, but messaging focused on "hyperlocal" user habits doubles down on Spotify's desire to strengthen the unity of platform subscribers (Nudd, 2017b). While it would be possible to characterize this messaging style as ongoing audience communication due to the repeated nature of the campaign, it is more fitting as a function of the off-platform feedback Spotify is providing its users. On platform recommendation efforts suggest to subscribers a level of platform interaction, but this campaign drives relationship cultivation home by providing Spotify and its global community of users an opportunity to discuss widely held user habits.

The message sourcing comes directly from user interaction on the platform, leaving little expected influence from biases. Campaign messaging reports both individual and group interaction with the platform using a public media channel. This decreases the likelihood that any one user feels singled out to the wider public audience. Even if one person is being targeted by the messaging, they experience this singling out as part of an effort to appeal to the collective of Spotify users. The campaign does not promote one aspect of the service, an appeal for subscription, or any financial implications for Spotify. This broad-based user forward approach makes the message more about the collective nature of Spotify's audience than Spotify itself as a firm. The campaign served data driven representations of user habits spanning 25 cities globally (Jardine, 2017). The in-house marketing and creative effort delivered primarily OOH marketing products including billboards and cutouts designed to engage its 60 million strong user base (Nudd, 2017a). Spotify has found regular success with this campaign, having run hyper-localized user driven billboards as a part of its end of year marketing efforts since 2015 (NY1 NEWS, 2015). Spotify users, and nonusers, can expect to get a glimpse into the collective listening habits of subscribers, and as such this campaign serves to integrate stakeholders into the processes of the organization (Tafesse & Kitchen, 2017).

The campaign also included a smaller B2B component delivering paid social, OOH and trade in nine markets (Nudd, 2017b). This content offered under the 'Spotify for Brands' moniker doubles down on Spotify's attempts to flex their data marketing capacity. These ads exist to convince other companies of Spotify's value as a data collection platform, with the end goal of attracting advertisers to the platform.

Messaging follows a wide array of tones; Spotify's representations of user data range from uplifting to lampooning. This diversity of messaging can be attributed to cultural

differences in their audience; American billboards are more likely to poke fun at political events, whereas global billboards are more likely to fit an “amusingly dark execution” in which the advertisements makes fun of shared negative experiences (Nudd, 2017a). CMO Seth Farbman explained how creative teams utilized a “fact-based approach” to copy writing (Nudd 2017b). In order to ensure messaging content was not too revealing, Spotify “sought permission” from individual users when using specific content from their profiles (Maheshwari, 2017). The collected data allows the team to understand how individuals and communities processed the events of the year, both positively and negatively. Messaging is tied to audience preferences, and Spotify pushes large numbers of messages and messaging styles out to these audiences. This allows them to diversify within cities and target specific consumers without them feeling as if Spotify is singling out a single user, or user’s habit. Figure 2 shows an example of a localized message related to streaming habits in London which was placed in a subway station (Spotify, 2017). It relates to Sam Smith, a British artist, who is popular in the area, and comments on a shared negative experience in a way which directly references one of his most popular songs in the city. Combining these factors along with the number of streams within the geographic area of the ad builds solidarity with its audience. Focusing on specific cities, in OOH channels, with a high concentration of messages, allows Spotify to limit the potential damage of a poor messaging choice.



Figure 2. Advertisement from the Spotify “2018 Goals” Campaign by Spotify, 2017.

### ***Integration Modes***

There is little communication consistency across the ‘2018 Goals’ campaign. The diversity of messaging follows Spotify’s attempt to coordinate different perceptions of platform use, based on user preference and communication style changes from musical influence, media channel, and geographic factors. The messages are specific to the fans, times, and places they exist within. Any one specific message is not easily applicable to a wide audience, but each message is designed to be highly engaging to its desired audience. This encourages sharing within fandoms and communities who feel included in a specific message. While users may not see their own personal user habits reflected in specific billboards, they can reflect their own experiences to the provided messages and may still feel included. Music is the “common

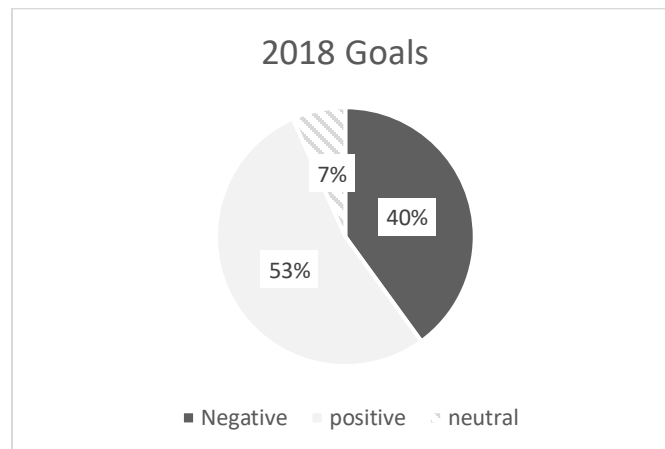
language” with which Spotify hopes to unite its highly diverse audiences (Nudd 2017b). Spotify chooses to highlight examples of the most popular music and current events to increase the likelihood that the general public feels they can interact with the messaging. The campaign is highly geographically customized in order to encourage interest, and it is primarily OOH which does not allow for a great deal of interactivity from the firm itself. Instead, Spotify hopes the messages it sends will spark interaction within audiences. The campaign creates highly sharable, niche content in a setting which is traditionally reserved for imprecise messaging. The use of data allows Spotify to more effectively connect audiences with shared experiences to music they can easily relate to.

### ***IMC Outcome: Tactical***

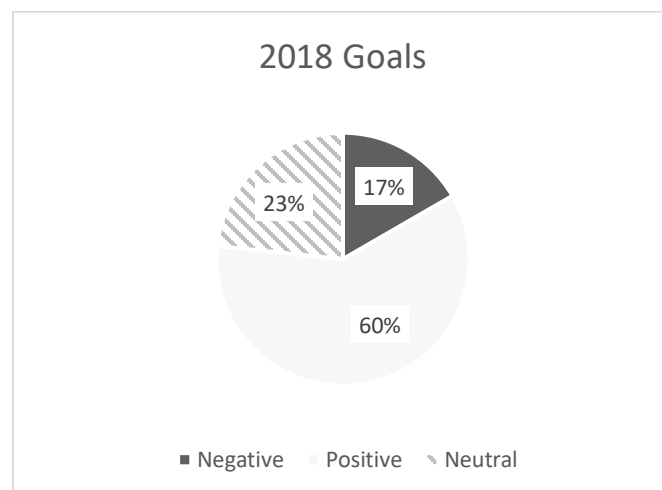
Spotify’s ‘2018 Goals’ campaign generated polarizing emotional responses as demonstrated in Figures 3 and 4. It is particularly interesting to look at the difference between the titles of articles written about the campaign and the content of those articles. The titles of these publications are perceived as being less negative than the actual content of the articles. It appears outlets are not looking to draw in readers with a salacious or negative headlines, rather there is some increased negativity within the articles themselves. Within the content of articles written about the campaign are selections of the campaign itself, as well as several insights from executives at Spotify. Adweek’s article “*How Spotify Makes Its Data-Driven Outdoor Ads, and Why They Work So Well*” was analyzed and determined to be in most positive titles. Its content, largely comprised of an interview with Spotify CMO, Seth Farbman, generated a negative overall placement. The subject matter of Spotify’s ‘2018 Goals’ campaign leans into the negative experiences of the past year, in a way which brings people together. Farbman states “It’s something we’ve experienced together. The highs and lows are not individualized. We’ve gone



through those as a society.” Rather than use wholly positive messaging to create a positive outcome, Spotify uses humor within the negative experiences of the year to add some levity to our collective experience (Nudd 2017b). Spotify’s choice to select negative trends from the year contributes to the negativity of articles.



*Figure 3.* Shares of articles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Spotify 2018 Goals campaign.



*Figure 4.* Shares of article titles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Spotify 2018 Goals campaign.

***IMC Outcome: Intermediate***

Spotify uses this campaign as a means of sharing information related to the habits of users. This distribution of data allows consumers to understand how their peers are using the platform. Users can feel some sense of unity in both the lived experiences of the year, and how that might play out in their platform usage. The campaign presents a mirror for the consumer to see themselves reflected in the experiences of others.

***IMC Outcome: Strategic***

The '2018 Goals,' and accompanying OOH ad series, has less strategic significance than the '2017 Wrapped' generated campaigns. The creative direction of this campaign changes each year and doesn't touch each user in the same way. Users of the service cannot rely on seeing their habits and interests reflected in this format as opposed to the '2017 Wrapped' campaign. Alternatively, this allows the '2018 Goals' campaign to highlight the more niche interests in a given year, potentially making the messaging more relevant to the consumer. The '2018 Goals' allows Spotify to flex its creative muscles and use data in ways which excite the consumer, without the fear of damaging a piece of marketing communication that is centrally relevant to brand value.

## **Spotify: ‘2017 Wrapped’**

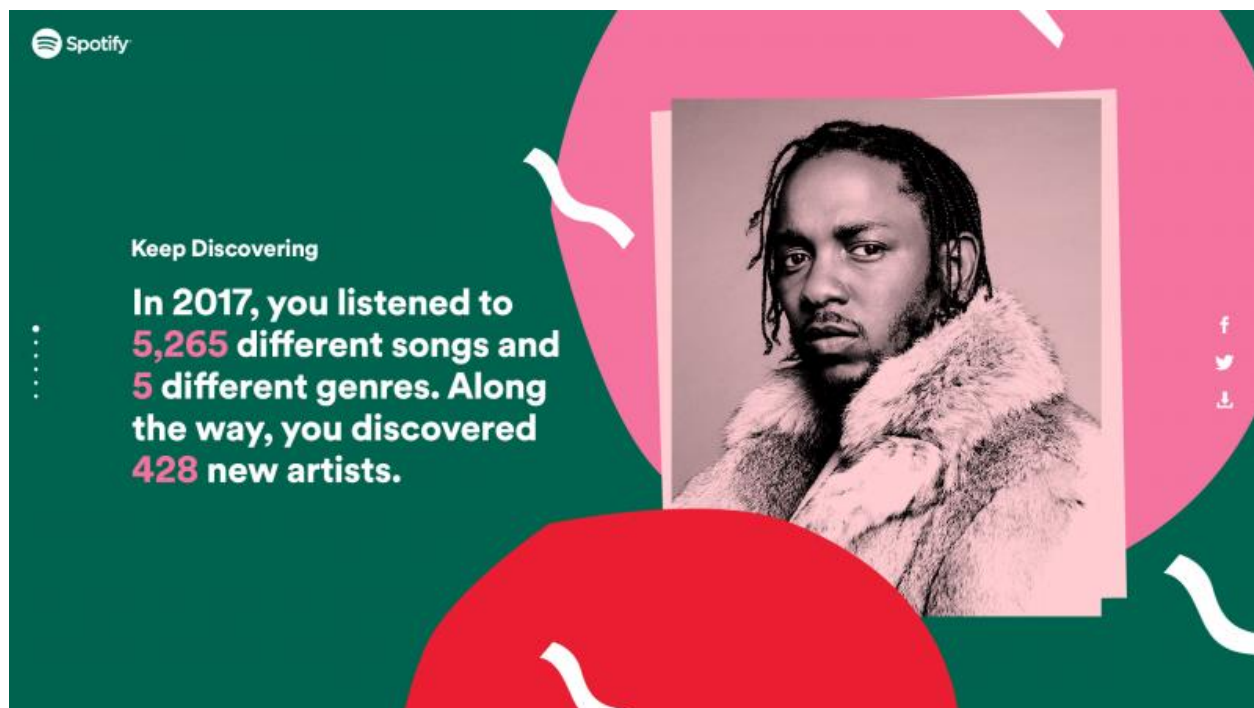
### ***Integration Scope***

Spotify’s ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign follows within the guidelines of a functional integration scope. Spanning many iterations since 2015, this wholly digital campaign pulls directly from the content collected from user databases. With such a standardized form across users, this campaign was planned and implemented at an organizational level rather than a local level, unlike the ‘2018 Goals’ campaign. Decisions regarding which aspects of consumer information to divulge reflect which topics Spotify believes will generate the highest volume of positive impressions (Hargreave, 2017). Spotify’s ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign is deeply customer centric and has become a reliable mainstay for users to learn more about their own interactions with Spotify and the platform itself.

### ***Integration Strategy***

Access to this campaign was provided to all Spotify users, reinforcing the ongoing relationship Spotify hopes to establish with its users. This distribution of data as content gamifies use of the platform, by allowing users to compare their use of the platform with their past usage, and to other users. These results allow users to share some part of themselves and engage further with the Spotify platform than they would normally from day-to-day (Lucassen & Jansen, 2014). Spotify’s desire to generate high volumes of impressions with the ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign is supported further with the chosen integration strategy. ‘2017 Wrapped’ exists digitally primarily on the Spotify platform, and secondarily on the larger, general internet. Spotify provided campaign support through their own social and communication channels, but most of the content outside of Spotify’s platform is created by users. The call to this campaign was pushed out to users through email and Spotify’s social media. Email allows Spotify to privately provide a small

insight into the data they will share with the user, encouraging them to continue through to the micro site to learn more. Messaging is objective and positive, there is no negativity within the results of the data release. Spotify aims to celebrate use of the platform and provide the top activity for the year for individuals and artists. Figure 5 displays a section of a '2017 Wrapped' release which shows the number of different songs, genres, and artists a user listened to in 2017 (Meahtenoha. 2017). There is no judgement on what users are listening to; Spotify has no direct reaction to the trends it is reporting on. Any tonal addition is created by the user in releasing the content, or in reaction to content released by users. Spotify does not join into the conversation related to the campaign, taking the role of an objective facilitator of data content.



*Figure 5.* Selection from the Spotify 2017 Wrapped campaign by Meahtenoha. 2017.

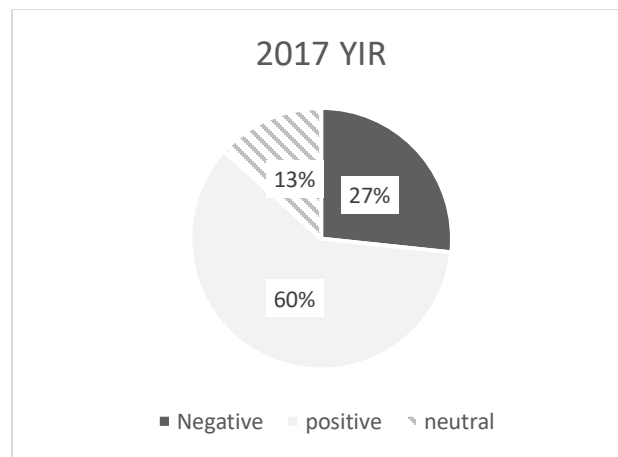
***Integration Modes***

Spotify allows users to choose whether they are interested in seeing their data. This opt-in process allows users to self-segment. Users who are okay with the idea of their data as advertising can engage with the campaign whether they are just seeing the data or sharing it. The opt-in process increases the likelihood that users who are not interested or comfortable with the campaign are not exposed to it. There is a high level of diversity in the messages generated by the ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign. Each Spotify user was able to generate a wholly unique profile highlighting their interactions with the platform over the course of the year. Despite the differences in each user’s listening habits on Spotify, the structure of each users’ report was the same. This allows users to compare ‘apples to apples’ with other fans of both similar and different music tastes. The ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign gives any Spotify user the means to have an engaging dialogue about music with any other user across the world. The high customization is coupled with a high level of interactivity. The creation of the data is the result of a year’s interaction with the platform, and a user must engage with the Spotify micro site through the whole program in order to get the summary of their data. The consistent theme, coupled with high customization and interaction, result in a marketing communication campaign that is deeply personal for users, and able to be easily shared with others.

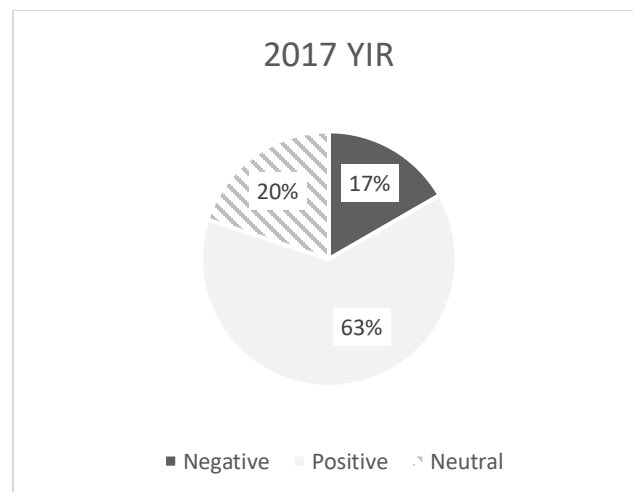
***IMC Outcome: Tactical***

The written reactions to Spotify’s ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign are overwhelmingly positive. Figures 6 and 7 show that the articles and titles were written positively 60% and 63% of the time, respectively. This campaign is highly individualized, and allows a direct release of specific user data. Negative instances of titles for example allude to “embarrassing” user habits and how “old” the program guesses you are based on listening habits (Abbruzzese, 2017; Gil, 2017). These negative phrases drive home how individual user data can be utilized to target user

habits and characteristics that one may not want to share with the larger world. This is where the structure of the campaign comes into play, no potentially embarrassing data can be seen by others without the originating user seeing, approving, and facilitating its release. Abbruzzese, author of the “embarrassing” article shares his own profile and concludes by saying “Spotify then encourages you to share your overall "wrap." We don't blame you if you skip that step.” (Abbruzzese, 2017). There is a high desire and even an excitement, for users and artists to share their data. Spotify’s Vice President of Product, Charlie Hellman, concludes that data is valuable as a sharable tool for artists when it allows us to “see how their music is actually touching their fans’ lives” (Stutz, 2017). Spotify’s release of individually identifying data through the ‘2017 Wrapped’ campaign is not designed to be a tool to expose users, but rather one to unite them.



*Figure 6.* Shares of articles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Spotify '2017 Wrapped' campaign.



*Figure 7.* Shares of article titles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Spotify '2017 Wrapped' campaign.

### ***IMC Outcome: Intermediate***

Spotify's '2017 Wrapped' campaign provides consumer information with regards to the popular listening habits of specific individuals. One would not assume there is a great deal of value in the differentiation of popular music on Spotify's platform versus other major music platforms. Instead of focusing on the most popular tracks, Spotify shows consumers how their habits compare to friends, peers, and strangers. This may also be a driving force for

nonsubscribers to join if their subscription service of choice does not offer a similar feature to Spotify Wrapped information.

### ***IMC Outcome: Strategic***

Spotify's yearly review contributes to brand value as an aspect of the platform that users have come to expect yearly. The campaign draws a large level of attention, with many users comparing it to other streaming services that do not create year end user reports. Longtime Spotify users can look to this campaign as a reason to stick with Spotify, much like many of the data driven tools Spotify uses in platforms like the Release Radar, or Daily Mixes. Spotify's utilization of data in this instance serves to add ongoing value to the consumer experience with the service across many years. The value of the ad extends far beyond its content, with users readily sharing their own excitement, predictions, and memes surrounding the yearly report. The tag *#spotifywrapped* generated thousands of tweets from media outlets, artists, and users in early December 2019, days before the campaign was released (Twitter Music, 2019). The campaign has become a function of the recommendation and curation services Spotify is known for as a platform.

## **Netflix Case Studies**

### ***Organizational Support Processes***

Netflix is a video streaming service whose primary business model is its digital subscription platform. Netflix's practices with respect to data collection and utilization are similar to Spotify's. The data Netflix collects contains the extent of platform user interactions; GDPR requests have provided insights into the detail of this data which includes individual choices tied to Netflix's 'choose your own adventure movie' *Bandersnatch* (Mikarv, 2019).



Netflix's data collection allows them to enhance content creation and recommendations on a highly individualized level.

Netflix has created a data warehouse service to hold all data sets. Metacat is a metadata warehouse service which allows Netflix employees from across the organization to access the company's data stores. This allows Netflix employees to have direct access to a complete source of user data (Netflix Technology Blog, 2018). Marketing efforts are completed by small internal teams with high levels of autonomy. Netflix's marketing spend is strategically directed, with the majority towards digital ads, followed by external events (Chen, 2019). In 2017 Netflix spent \$1.28 billion on marketing versus \$6.3 billion on content. Marketing represented roughly 10.9% of Netflix's \$11.7 billion dollar revenue in 2017. The company's marketing spend as a percent of revenue has remained consistent since 2017. Revenue has increased each year, which is in line with subscription growth despite increased competition. Netflix's goal is for content (which serves as internal marketing) to be so enticing to the consumer that the company does not need to spend any money on external marketing efforts (Molla, 2018).

### **Netflix: 'Christmas Prince'**

#### ***Integration Scope***

Netflix's 'Christmas Prince' tweet is an example of a tactical marketing communication effort. A small team dedicated solely to creation of social content is responsible for Netflix's Twitter voice. Netflix's micro approach to social media content is to generate a genuine dialogue with the general public. They can generate immediate outcomes from their audience regarding their programs. Netflix trusts individual employees to convey the brands message in real time with the fans of its diverse shows and movies. The social media team is consistently generating content which is pertinent both to fans of specific programs, and the overall branding of Netflix

as a platform. Since Netflix allows a great deal of freedom for their content creators, not implementing a “strict approval” process like many other large brands (Beer, 2019), thus it is not likely that anyone outside of the social media marketing team viewed the draft of the ‘Christmas Prince’ tweet before it was posted.

### ***Integration Strategy***

Netflix utilizes social media regularly in order to raise awareness of their content. Twitter is a popular medium for Netflix; beyond providing a platform to promote content, Twitter allows Netflix to reach their audience as peers. Twitter is a two-way media channel, this can be contrasted with traditional advertising media, and more modern one way social media like YouTube. Branded Twitter content is more likely to be used to engage the audience in a larger conversation, rather than providing self-promotional content. This specific tweet is about a very niche user activity, but is easily accessible for the general public. This tweet was more directed to those who are not familiar with the *A Christmas Prince* movie series, rather than fans of the movie, in hopes of exposing them to this seasonal content offering. The goal is to get the name of the movie out into the minds of the uninitiated and encourage virality with the goal to get much more attention to the social content Netflix is releasing, being circulated rapidly by the audience. Virality is heavily influenced by the content of messaging. By using a sarcastic, aggressive humor style in asking “Who hurt you?” the tweet, as shown in Figure 8, effectively encourages users to share and comment on the statement (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015; Netflix, 2017). Netflix’s twitter account also replies to users who are replying to this tweet, this allows them to extend the consumer perception of Netflix’s voice. The replies continue in a personal humorous tone, ribbing users who identify with the initial message, and those who aren’t a fan of

the movie. Netflix positions itself as a peer to its social media following, effectively utilizing the scope of their social media marketing team to foster human conversations with their audience.



Figure 8. Netflix Christmas Prince Tweet by Netflix, 2017.

### ***Integration Modes***

Netflix's twitter strategy relies on interactivity. This campaign reflects that, with their official Twitter account responding to four different users. Netflix responds to positive and negative user responses, as well as a news article covering the tweet itself. Their communication builds a 'tongue-in-cheek' irreverence with very diverse content tied uniquely to their programs. The 'Christmas Prince' tweet fits well within this tone. Through its social interactions, Netflix hopes to engage with its audience as if it were itself a member of the audience. Netflix puts out communications through social media in order to generate conversation, and then contributes further to this conversation (Beer, 2019). Transparency is highly important for the audience Netflix is communicating with; they work to emphasize their brand transparency through social interaction (Morris, 2019). The subject matter of the message is highly customized to users with

a specific interest, but the framing and use of humor makes it engaging to those who haven't been exposed to the actual movies.

### ***IMC Outcome: Tactical***

Netflix's 'Christmas Prince' garnered the most evenly distributed emotional response compared to the other three cases based on the sentiment analysis. No specific trend towards positive, negative, or neutral responses was reflected in the majority of responses, as shown in Figures 9 and 10. It appears that the implications of Netflix's messaging are quite different based on the outlet. Use of humor fits with Netflix's social strategy, but the tongue-in-cheek way Netflix speaks about specific user habits generates polarizing responses. Singling out specific users contributed to the large negative emotional response. Rather than using data to find the storylines that unite users, Netflix is pulling out the stories from data to make fun of its subscribers. Concerns that Netflix is using their vast data capabilities to call out specific users lead directly to discussions of the company's omnipresence, with Steven Colbert joking "that's funny cause they watch everything we do" (The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, 2017). How we contextualize firms' control of our data can also result in less grave reactions. The fact that Colbert is willing to make jokes on the matter, and his audience reacts positively, provides evidence to the positive reactions we can have to polarizing uses of data. Many outlets are willing to extend the humorous situation and make humorous comments on the matter, but this can often turn dark. Humors' subjectivity can lead many to disagree with the way it is being used, and cannot create a lighthearted situation when individuals believe firms are blatantly wielding power over them. Data, when used in a way which does not resonate with consumers, is a concerning reminder of the power companies have over individuals.

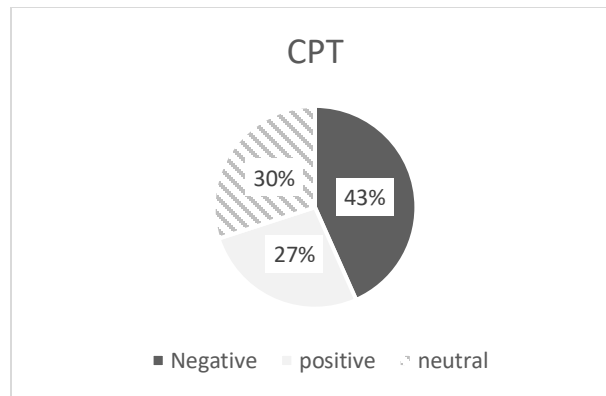


Figure 9. Shares of articles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Netflix Christmas Prince campaign.

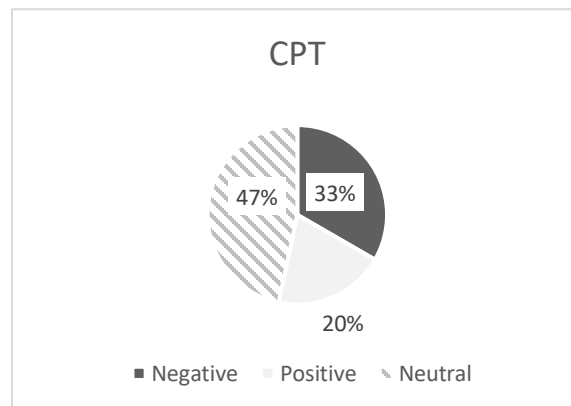


Figure 10. Shares of article titles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Netflix Christmas Prince campaign.

### ***IMC Outcome: Intermediate***

The use of data in this instance serves to show people the magnitude of user data which Netflix is able to collect and report on. There is little tangible value to the consumer in knowing 53 people are frequently watching a certain movie, and the tone Netflix takes in the tweet suggests that perhaps there might be something wrong with a strong desire to watch this movie multiple times. Ultimately the value of this Tweet is in its ability to entertain some people with data more so than to create valuable insights through data.

***IMC Outcome: Strategic***

Netflix has long been lauded for its authentic voice and willingness to take risks with branding efforts. This instance continues in Netflix's push to be witty but irreverent, and to provide a cohesive creative experience on and off their platform. Netflix hopes to use data in marketing as a tool to strengthen a core brand image in an increasingly competitive market.

**Netflix: 'Year in Bingeing'*****Integration Scope***

The 'Year in Bingeing' campaign reports on the results of a survey of American Netflix users. This survey and the resulting report were created by Netflix's publicity team. Although the team often works cross functionally to create marketing promotions, it is most realistic to assume this project was done just by the public relations (PR) team (Jones-Liang, 2018). The 'Year in Bingeing' was only released through Netflix's media center, where they have released similar projects, but with differing forms. The nature of this campaign is tactical, it provides insights into which programs were the most popular on Netflix for the year. The campaign adds value to the programming as it illuminates wider trends of viewing on Netflix.

***Integration Strategy***

Unlike much of Netflix's social strategy, the 'Year in Bingeing' takes an almost purely informational tone. Content is provided about both large-scale user habits and individual users actions. Much of the content is provided in list form, with individual highlights provided in the release. Data was provided from a survey of Netflix users. The infographic and article were released through Netflix's Media Center, with most of the traction coming from other media publications reporting on the release. Netflix uses two very popular styles of content in this campaign in order to maximize engagement, infographics and listicles. Infographics display data

in a visually appealing format, and listicles are articles comprised of lists based on a specific topic. Both mediums have boomed in usage over recent years due in large part to their shareability, and effectiveness in conveying information (Smiciklas, 2012; Vijgen, 2014).

Netflix's strategy with this release is to provide a large amount of fun content that can be easily regurgitated by outlets and spawn the creation of a large amount of secondary content. BuzzFeed, arguably the leader of the listicle movement, fell right in line with Netflix's goal of dispersion, reporting on the "coolest facts" from the 'Year in Binging' (Flaherty, 2017). The article contains various cropped sections of the infographic, shown in Figure 11, interspersed with specific facts from the article (Dwyer, 2017). For Netflix, this provides free promotion for the platform, tailored to specific insights the author believes will be most valuable for their audience. Netflix's public relations team provided the content in a way that individual news outlets could reformat in order to best reach their specific audience. It is particularly interesting to see that this is not a release of viewership numbers, but rather a curated selection of lists that are meant to highlight categories that prioritize original programming over licensed content. Netflix did not release overall viewership data in 2017, in fact there was no third-party authentication of viewership data until Nielsen began its "Subscription Video on Demand" program in October of 2017 (Perez, 2017). Since then reports have shown that licensed content is generally more viewed than original content. Nielsen reported that in 2018 the most popular show, *The Office*, received over 33 million minutes more of streaming than their most popular original show, *Orange is the New Black* (Lynch, 2019). *The Office* does not appear in the infographic, or associated article, suggesting that Netflix is choosing topics that will highlight the best of original content. While the use of data appears to be purely informational, there is clearly a good deal of strategy editing used in the selection of list category.



Figure 11. Netflix 2017 Year in Bingeing Infographic by Dwyer, 2017.

### Integration Modes

Netflix's 2017 'Year in Bingeing' reflects a high level of consistency. The initial campaign is one article and infographic that contains the entirety of the communications. This broad-based release allows all users to see the exact same data. There is no perception that a third party could potentially have access to additional data as a result of this campaign. This is also highly efficient for Netflix in terms of personal relations, as it allows media outlets to select easily from the whole data set for reporting. Netflix provides no interaction or customization

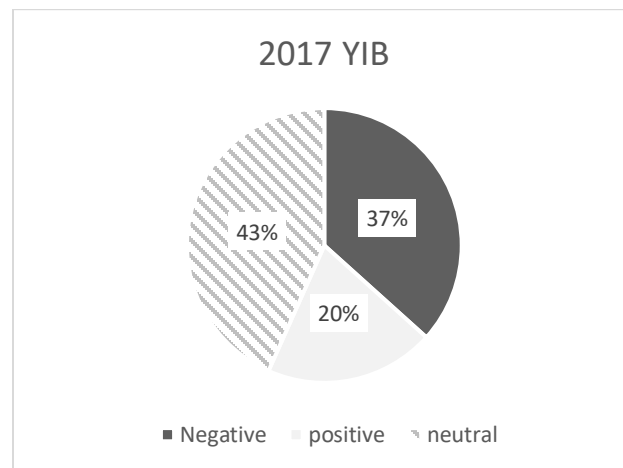


beyond the initial release of data. Any targeting beyond the broad subscription base is done by the authors of secondary content. Netflix chooses to take on the role of an objective facilitator of the release of data. Although the campaign data released is quite general, the amount of data allows writers to create a more specific story in future iterations. The data is customized to the content of the year; in other iterations of this theme Netflix chooses to include different subjections of programming, grouped in different categories. With an everchanging library of content, this campaign is a time capsule of the usage of Netflix within a specific time frame.

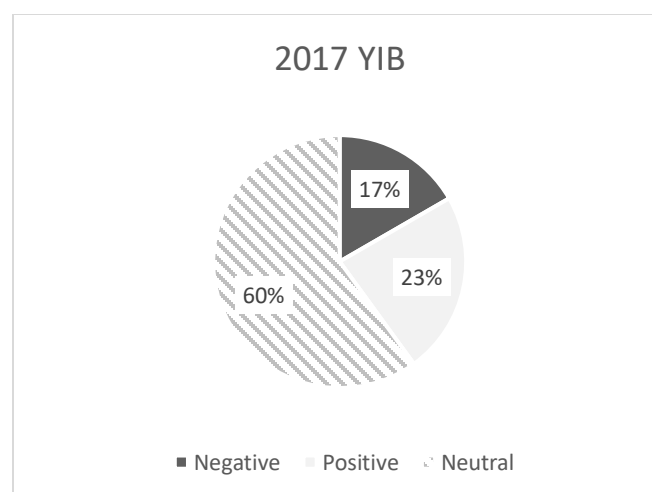
### ***IMC Outcome: Tactical***

Informational content produces a neutral emotional response as shown in Figures 12 and 13. Cognitive response leads to consumer knowledge and information. There is no judgement made on the content of the data other than excitement for the shows with large followings. Emotional responses can be contributed to projection of personal beliefs onto the data. Whether this results in positive or negative attributions, Netflix is not involved in the judgement of user behavior. The majority of the content in the campaign is fact-based lists, and the articles reporting on the campaign follow a similar structure. The content of articles written about the campaign contain the emotional responses which will resonate with a specific audience. It is important to note that many articles take this campaign as a selection of viewership data. Titles such as “The Most-Streamed Netflix Shows of 2017: Know Them Now & Watch Them Later” is a seemingly honest misrepresentation of the data. Said article continues on with the category given by Netflix, listing the “Top Ten Most-Binged Netflix TV Shows in 2017” (Phoenix Internet, 2017). There is a significant difference between the two, which serves to change both the author’s and audiences’ perception of the data provided by Netflix. Most streamed could be perceived as an objective nominal measure of Netflix content; whereas, this survey is a measure

of “new show or new season launches of Netflix originals from November 1, 2016 - November 1, 2017 only” (Dwyer, 2017).



*Figure 12.* Pie chart of the shares of articles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Netflix Year in Bingeing campaign.



*Figure 13.* Pie chart of the shares of article titles which are described as positive, negative, and neutral for the Netflix Year in Bingeing campaign.

### ***IMC Outcome: Intermediate***

Netflix’s ‘Year in Bingeing’ allows people to gain better insight into the popular content on the platform. Subscribers are able compare their habits to those of the general public, and specific extraordinary cases. There is also the opportunity to expose users and nonusers to

content they may have not seen before. The grouping of lists into specific categories creates thematic recommendations, not unlike those that Netflix provides on platform. Grouping and the specific insights provide context to programming, users who identify with a group heading might feel more inclined to explore shows ranked within that heading. The ranking excites the competitiveness of fans of specific programs, and allows them to feel some sense of satisfaction in feeling seen by the platform

***IMC Outcome: Strategic***

Netflix has been quiet with regards to releasing user viewing data over the years, specifically with regards to licensed content versus original content. 2017's 'Year in Bingeing' is a unique case in that it includes a number of Netflix's licensed shows at the time, but clearly prioritizes original content. This campaign works to reinforce the value of Netflix Original programming, this is an increasingly valuable point of differentiation for Netflix as a service. Creating data driven marketing campaigns allows Netflix to establish its value as a content aggregator in a bet to grow market share.

## Conclusion

As competition in the streaming space heats up, services will need to continue to provide differentiating factors that add value to the customer experience. Firms have used their consumer data to augment customer's experiences with a product; exploration of the use of this data has ushered in a new era of user data as marketing content. Spotify has been able to build marketing campaigns using data that are ubiquitous with their brand. Incorporating a large swath of users allows the firm to minimize an individual feeling exposed by a public release of data. In wide-reaching data driven marketing campaigns, the firm can effectively use humor and dark subject matter in a way which is not perceived as negative. Spotify is also able to build networks of users with their own data. Releasing campaigns within communities, be they location or interest based, increases the likelihood customers relate to the message at hand.

Data driven marketing campaigns do not need to be massive undertakings in order to generate positive consumer reactions. Netflix was able to spread a tailored narrative highlighting the best of timely original content with their 'Year in Bingeing' lists. This informational release of data provides a touchpoint for Netflix programs off of the platform and allows users to rally around the programming fandoms they identify with. Netflix casts a wide net and touches diverse audiences with simple messaging. This is contrasted with the use of data in their 'Christmas Prince' tweet in which a niche group of user's habits are called into question in a judgmental tone.

The small number of users called into question with the perceived negative messaging that rubbed many people the wrong way. It is worrying for many to see a large firm, with control over untold swaths of consumer data, using their power to call out individuals in a mocking manner. Where Spotify used mocking language in a way which was able to provide users a

higher context for their use of the platform, Netflix is shaming individual users for having a strong niche interest. Within the scope of a larger marketing campaign this likely would not have garnered the negative attention it received. This outcome could have been avoided if it was perceived as a part of a larger story on customer insights or was released through a more tailored medium. Netflix's own 'Year in Bingeing' was able to get away with poking fun of power bingers without negative backlash stating "The one we're still scratching our heads about, the person who watched *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* 365 days in a row" (Dwyer, 2017). Here Netflix is able to use dark humor to add some insight into the consumer experience in a way which doesn't feel exposing.

This is not to say that the 'Christmas Prince' tweet was an altogether bad marketing choice. Using data to draw one-off, witty conclusions about users fits well within Netflix's overall social media strategy. The account is run in a way which should be irreverent and feel like something a regular fan would say. However, it seems that when the smokescreen is lifted through commentary revealing insights only a large corporation could deliver, audiences feel exposed. Netflix was able to really home in on their comedic message in this instance, despite the fact that the implications held a large deal of negative perception. The large amount of public exposure of the story surrounding this tweet continued through 2018 when the movie's sequel was released. One outlet made the argument that the conversation surrounding the movie after the "creepy" tweet was enough to make *The Christmas Prince* "an Internet sensation" (Yahr, 2018). Like in the case of the 'Year in Bingeing', exposure to Netflix's content was heightened by the response to the use of data in marketing. A niche movie was pushed to the forefront of the minds of Twitter enthusiasts, and Late Night viewers alike. In lieu of not having access to

Netflix's streaming numbers for the film, we can at least take the two sequels as an indication that the tweet did not ruin the movie's reputation.

When using data in marketing, marketers and firms need to be clear about the impact the overall campaign will have on a consumer's perception of the company. There are specific qualities that need to be taken into consideration in order to suggest that these marketing efforts are more than a glorified data breach. Perceptions of the release of data may have more to do with the context of the marketing, rather than the content.

It must be stated that it is fundamentally difficult, if not misleading, to generalize from a single phenomenon or case. The control of timing, industry, and context with which these communications came to be, and a standard framework to be applied to all of them will contribute to an analysis which is more situationally neutral. Utilizing statistical approaches to the perceptual outcome of each case, will provide more universally applicable insight into the possible outcomes of personal data as marketing communication. However, I acknowledge that the limitations of this research design will contribute to limitations in results.

While the qualitative nature of this review will not allow for sweeping generalizations, this research pursuit holds significance for several stakeholders in the streaming industry. The emergence of this field means there are not many best practices for firms to follow when considering the utilization of user data in marketing communications. In conducting a breakdown of campaign components and outcomes, it is possible to provide an application of marketing frameworks for which best practices can be developed. This initial conversation regarding the utilization of personal data in marketing communications will also ideally encourage the development of more quantitative research pursuits. The value of personal data is more than its ability to feed an algorithm or evaluate where to place ads; this research inquiry will allow

stakeholders in data analysis to effectively approach data driven IMC. In the end, the significance of this research is aimed at creating a dialogue moving towards a more sophisticated approach to the psychological and practical implications of personal data in marketing.

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